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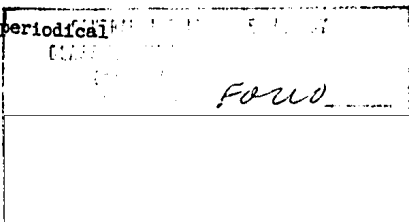
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WORK OF THE STATE VETERINARY INSTITUTE
IN COMBATING CONTAGIOUS DISEASES IN POLAND

The Veterinary Division of the PINOW (Panstwowy Instytut Naukowy Gospodarstwa Wiejskiego, State Scientific Research Institute for Rural Husbandry) was the only veterinary center of a scientific and experimental character in Poland before World War II. This division had only a few veterinaries for diagnosis, for scientific research, and for the production of veterinary biochemicals on a national scale.

Within the first months after the establishment of People's Poland, the PIW (Panstwowy Instytut Weterynaryjny, State Veterinary Institute) in Pulawy was created as a scientific research and production center. In its short period of existence, the PIW has expanded its scientific activities and has organized a number of regional centers. At present, the PIW has a substantial number of scientific research workers in Pulawy, in its branches in Bydgoszcz and Gorzow Wielkopolski, and in the 12 WZHW (Wojewodzkie Zaklady Higieny Weterynaryjnej, Wojewodztwo Veterinary Hygiene Research Laboratories), the last-mentioned distributed throughout Poland. With the PIW's rapid development, the sphere of its activities and its role in the economic life of Poland are increasing. In addition to scientific research, one of the most important tasks of the PIW is to help eliminate contagious and parasitic diseases of domestic animals, which, after the war, were the chief difficulty in Poland's livestock breeding, and often created a serious danger to human health.

Some of the diseases widely prevalent after the war were glanders, rabies, exanthema coiale paralyticum, hog cholera, fowl plague (pestis avium), and scabies of horses and sheep.

In the present economic structure, with the creation of large farms, producers' cooperatives, and livestock breeding centers, and the creation of large industrial centers entailing large-scale food services, the government must have at its disposal proved methods to combat epizootics. Epizootics can cause not only a marked reduction in the number of head of livestock,

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resulting in an important economic loss to the country, but they can also endanger the health of the public. The duty of conducting a mass diagnosis of the entire horse population to determine foci of glanders, a threat to human health, has fallen upon the PIW. An example of a disease which can become an important social problem is rabies, which, after the war, was a threat to almost every citizen. The PIW is rapidly building a special research laboratory to produce vaccine for rabies. The mass vaccination of dogs in Poland over a 2-year period is reducing cases of rabies to a minimum.

After the most urgent matters concerning the most dangerous epizootics are settled, the Ministry of Agriculture recommends that the PIW develop methods for diagnosis, prevention, and elimination of contagious diseases. For this purpose, the PIW is organizing the WZHW which, in close cooperation with the region, conduct constant diagnostic tests. The PIW renders prompt aid to the regional veterinary, by making a correct diagnosis of the disease through laboratory tests on dissections or blood. Laboratories are engaged in improving present diagnostic methods, or in discovering new methods adapted to the requirements and conditions of the environment and to modern methods of science.

The WZHW, whose monthly tests reach tens of thousands, can handle only the most urgent requirements. A state of equilibrium must be reached between requirements in the field and aid rendered by the government to overcome epizootic diseases. Under the Six-Year Plan, the PIW will reach this equilibrium, when each WZHW will become a PIW in miniature and will have at least five specialists, in the fields of bacteriology, serology, pathological anatomy, poultry diseases, and invasive diseases. Besides this, the WZHW should have experienced managers who are epizootic specialists, to direct all activities and, together with the employees, to work out the most timely problems connected with the needs of the area of the given WZHW.

Another no less important and urgent problem within the framework of the plan of the PIW is to organize in the near future a Division of Epizootiology, in which a number of scientists could devote their work to individual problems of contagious diseases of all types of domestic animals. The most important problems from an economic standpoint are those related to tuberculosis, brucellosis, infectious bovine mastitis, hoof and mouth disease, streptococcal infection, infectious anemia of horses, Teschen disease in hogs, hog influenza, hog erysipelas, hog cholera, and fish, poultry, and bee diseases.

In addition to the present scientific research and diagnostic work, the PIW also has the responsibility of supplying the entire country with veterinary biochemicals and drugs to combat contagious and parasitic diseases. At present, the production of some biochemicals reaches several tens of thousands of liters. The PIW should be relieved of the responsibility of producing veterinary biochemicals and drugs by the creation of a separate enterprise. The PIW would then be able to devote full time to scientific research. The producing research laboratories taken over by the PIW after the war were in an extremely bad state as a consequence of plunder and destruction by the Germans. The laboratories undertook the difficult task of producing biochemicals with scant supplies and personnel. Through the great efforts of the entire personnel, the requirements of Poland were fully covered without resorting to imports.

It is apparent that the tasks of the PIW are not easy. Many difficulties are caused primarily by a shortage of responsible specialists. The few specialists who survived the war and the German occupation had to be placed first of all in teaching positions in schools of higher learning. As a new center, the PIW had to depend on the cooperation of a few professors of schools of higher learning who offered their services to the PIW. These professors were Doctors Trawinski, Stefanski, Parnas, Brill, and Zulinski. Further favorable development of the PIW will depend on the proper training and expansion of cadres of specialists.

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Through a visit to the USSR, the PIW scientists had an opportunity to become acquainted with the attainments of Soviet science. An example of the USSR's interest in the PIW is Professor Skryabin's visit to Pulawy. His suggestions and advice were applied by the PIW. The PIW's scientific contacts with other People's Democracies also brought mutual benefits.

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